DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 298 229 UD 026 364

AUTHOR Farrar, Eleanor
TITLE The Boston Compact: A Teaching Case.
INSTITUTION Center for Policy Research in Education.
SPONS AGENCY Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE Jul 88
GRANT G008690011
NOTE 42p.; Adapted from a longer essay by Eleanor Farrar and Anthony Cipollone, "After the Signing: The Boston Compact 1982-1985," in "American Business and the Public School," M. Levine and R. Trachtman, eds., New York: Teachers College Press, 1988; see ED 293 939.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Business; Business Responsibility; *Cooperative Programs; Corporate Support; *Educational Improvement; *Employment Opportunities; High School Graduates; High Schools; *High School Students; Politics of Education; Program Evaluation; Program Implementation; *School Business Relationship; School Responsibility; Urban Schools
IDENTIFIERS *Boston Compact; Boston Public Schools MA; *Massachusetts (Boston)

ABSTRACT

The Boston Compact, signed in September 1982, is a formal agreement between the Boston School Department and members of the business community to collaborate in making new educational and employment opportunities available to the city's high school students. Co-signers agreed to the following: (1) assist in developing private sector initiatives in employment training; (2) help double the number of schools participating in the Jobs Collaborative, a school-to-work transition program; (3) recruit 300 companies to participate in a priority hiring program for graduates by 1984; and (4) increase the number of summer jobs available for students by 25 percent by 1984. The business community agreed to hire 400 June 1983 graduates into permanent jobs and to increase the number to 1,000 students by 1985 if they could meet entry-level requirements. On its side, the school department agreed to: (1) reduce both absentee and dropout rates by 5 percent annually; (2) implement increased standards for graduation that would ensure minimal competency in mathematics and reading by 1986; and (3) increase job and college placements after graduation by 5 percent annually. The business community exceeded its goals, but the schools were less successful. Although student performance as measured by standardized tests in mathematics and reading had increased, district average results were still below the national average. Instead of decreasing, the dropout rate increased each year. (FMW)

9-13-88

ED298229

CPRE
CENTER FOR POLICY RESEARCH IN EDUCATION
*a consortium:*

THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY
RUTGERS

Michigan State University

STANFORD UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY of WISCONSIN-MADISON

UD026364

# The Boston Compact
## A Teaching Case

Eleanor Farrar

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

## CENTER FOR POLICY RESEARCH IN EDUCATION (CPRE)

CPRE unites four of America's leading research institutions in a unique venture to improve the quality of schooling. The consortium members are: the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey; the School of Education at Michigan State University; the School of Education at Stanford University; and the Wisconsin Center for Education Research at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, CPRE conducts research on the implementation and effects of state and local education policies. By communicating its findings to policymakers, the Center attempts to contribute to the framing of education policies that will have a positive impact on children in classrooms.

CPRE's research activities are concentrated in five major areas:

- Policies on Curriculum and Student Standards
- Teacher Policies
- Educational Indicators and Monitoring
- New Roles and Responsibilities
- Evolution of the Reform Movement

In addition to conducting research in these areas, CPRE publishes reports and briefs on a variety of education issues. The Center also sponsors regional workshops for state and local policymakers.

Research Reports are issued by CPRE to facilitate the exchange of ideas among policymakers and researchers who share an interest in education policy. The views expressed in the reports are those of individual authors, and are not necessarily shared by the U.S. Department of Education, CPRE, or its institutional partners. This publication was funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, grant number OERI-G008690011.

To obtain copies of this and other CPRE publications, contact: Center for Policy Research in Education, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, New Brunswick, NJ 08901; attention: Publications. Phone: (201) 828-3872.

CPRE
CENTER FOR
POLICY RESEARCH
IN EDUCATION
*a consortium:*

THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY
RUTGERS

Michigan
State
University

STANFORD
UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY of
WISCONSIN-
MADISON

# The Boston Compact
## A Teaching Case

Eleanor Farrar

July 1988

TC-001

## CONTENTS


FOREWORD . . . . . v

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS . . . . . vii

PART A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT . . . . . 1

Before the Signing of the Business-Education Agreement . . . . . 2

PART B: DECISION . . . . . 9

PART C: IMPLEMENTATION . . . . . 13

The 1983 Summer Planning Institute . . . . . 18
The Compact in Jamaica Plain and Dorchester High Schools . . . . 20

PART D: RESULTS . . . . . 27

PART E: POSTSCRIPT . . . . . 35

## FOREWORD

The overall mission of the Center for Policy Research in Education (CPRE) is to foster increased understanding of the effects of state and local education policy on schools and classrooms. As part of this mission, CPRE commissioned Eleanor Farrar to write a case study of The Boston Compact, the earliest of the present generation of collaborative ventures between business and education. The Compact is notable for its bold promise of jobs for inner city youth in return for school performance and reform.

This case study is directed at three audiences: those who have a specific interest in The Compact, those who have a more general interest in local education policy and those who teach public policy and administration.

Farrar's account of The Compact traces its precursors in early collaborative efforts between business and education, describes the decisions leading up to the Compact and discusses its early implementation. The case focuses on how business and education leaders forged agreement on key provisions of The Compact and how specific schools in Boston responded to that agreement. We hope you will find this case useful.

Richard F. Elmore
Michigan State University
Center for Policy Research in Education

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author is particularly grateful to Richard Elmore for suggesting that these cases be written based on an earlier report*, and for his careful reading of case drafts along the way.

* * * * * * * *

Eleanor Farrar is associate professor in the Department of Organization, Administration and Policy, Faculty of Educational Studies, at the State University of New York-Buffalo. Her research and writing has focussed on education policy issues at the federal, state, and local levels, particularly as they affect high schools. She is co-author of The Shopping Mall High School (1985) and currently is conducting research on the administration and reform of urban schools.

* This case was adapted from a longer essay by Eleanor Farrar and Anthony Cipollone, "After the Signing: The Boston Compact 1982-1985 in American Business and the Public School, M. Levine and R. Trachtman, eds., New York: Teachers' College Press, 1988.

## THE BOSTON COMPACT
## PART A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

On September 22, 1982, an extraordinary press conference took place in the main hall of the Boston School Department. Sharing the stage were the chief executive officers of two prominent Boston corporations, Boston Mayor Kevin White and School Superintendent Robert Spillane, and the President of the School Committee. This gathering was unprecedented in the history of the city; it brought together the leaders of Boston's traditionally warring factions: the schools, the city administration and the business community. Said Robert Schwartz, Executive Director of the Compact and a former Kevin White aide who was present that day, "To see (former mayor) Kevin White, who had never been in the school department building before, created such a wave around the place that it was clear that this wasn't just another announcement."

If the gathering created a stir among observers of the Boston political scene, the announcement came as an even greater surprise. These leaders were making public pledges to involve their institutions in an ambitious new plan for improving the education and work prospects of Boston's young people: The Boston Compact.

The Boston Compact is a formal agreement between the school department, members of the business community, area colleges and universities, and the Boston trade unions to collaborate in making new education and employment opportunities available to the city's students.[1] In signing the Compact, the business community agreed to hire 400 June 1983 graduates into permanent jobs and within two more years, to increase that number to 1,000 students if they could meet entry-level requirements. The co-signers also agreed to work closely with the Boston Private Industry Council (The PIC), a private, federally supported, non-profit organization established in 1979 to explore private sector initiatives in employment training. They were to help the PIC expand from three to six the number of schools participating in the Jobs Collaborative, a school-to-work transition program. Finally, they pledged to recruit, by 1984, 300 companies to participate in a priority hiring program for Boston graduates and to increase the number of

---

1 This case deals only with agreements between the Boston Public Schools and the Boston business community.

summer jobs available for Boston high school students from 750 in 1982 to 1,000 in 1983.

On the education side, the school department made a commitment to reduce both high school absentee and dropout rates by 5 percent annually. It also agreed to implement increased academic standards, requiring that by 1986, all graduates meet minimum standards in reading and math. The school department also promised a 5 percent annual increase in the number of students who either took a job or went to college after graduation.

Immediately the Compact was heralded nationwide as a unique undertaking. For Boston's leaders had publicly proclaimed a commitment to mobilize their joint resources to solve problems that no major city had as yet successfully overcome: youth unemployment and school drop-outs. According to the latest national statistics, high school dropout rates, after years of steady decline, had risen 5-1/2 percent between 1972 and 1982. While one out of four students dropped out nationwide, rates in the 15 largest cities ranged from 29% to 52%--even higher for minority students. Youth employment figures were equally grim, as wide gaps existed between the ability of minority and non-minority youth to find work. For example, in the period from 1955 to 1981, employment for minority males aged 16-19 was cut almost in half, plummeting from 53% to slightly over 26%; during the same period, opportunities for non-minority males hovered near the 50 percent mark. The plight of young minority females has been equally dismal. In 1981, their employment rates stood at 21 percent versus 46 percent for white females in the 16-19 year old range. Boston's score card mirrored the national statistics. While the school system publicly acknowledged a drop-out rate of less than 10%, its administrators privately admitted that the true figure was closer to 50%.

**Before the Signing of the Business-Education Agreement**

Looking back at the 1982 press conference, one Boston observer noted that it was "the kind of scene that has never happened in this city." Several people, circumstances and events had converged to create what Jim Darr, Executive Director of the Boston PIC, called, "the ripeness of the moment."

First, important working relationships already existed. Business and education had been thrown together by order of the Court in the 1974 Boston School desegregation case, and they had been working together, albeit uneasily,

since then, through the Tri-Lateral Council. The Tri-Lateral was a "mixed success," according to Dan Morley, vice president of the State Street Bank and a former PIC president. He characterized it as "mostly a paper arrangement, with small amounts of [money] going to the schools and the schools suspicious because they saw business mucking around in curriculum and they just wanted business to get jobs for the kids." But through seven years' experience working with each other on the Tri-Lateral, as well as the PIC, the Jobs Collaborative, and the Chamber of Commerce, businessmen and school people had arrived at several understandings about what the schools needed. "You had an evolution from concern about the school system to concrete action toward improving the schools," according to William Edgerly, chairman of the State Street Bank and former PIC chair. "There was an act of commitment by large employers to get involved with the schools when the Compact started."

A second set of relationships existed within the Boston business community through the Coordinating Committee, better known in local circles as the Vault. The Vault had been operating since the late 1950s as an exclusive group of twenty-five chief executives of the city's largest firms, who shared information and coordinated company activities in areas of social responsibility and public policy in Boston. The Vault's member firms, which included Edgerly's State Street Bank, were the first companies to sign the Compact--as show of support whose impact is hard to over-estimate.

Relationships also existed as a result of the old federally-funded Youth Entitlement Program which Boston had participated in from 1978-1980. As one part of the Youth Employment Demonstration Project Act under the 1977 amendments to CETA, the Entitlement poured over $40 million into the city over a two year period. It was unique not only for its funding level, but also because it guaranteed a job to nearly half the city's teenagers, provided they were income eligible and stayed in or returned to school. The Entitlement's in-school employment requirements forced the city's employment and manpower agency and its public schools to collaborate--something they had heretofore carefully avoided. What was at first a rocky relationship had become down right friendly by the time the Compact entered on the Boston scene.

Frank Morris, president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, also believes that the Boston labor market conditions gave "a rational reason" to the business community's interest in the Compact:

> It was very easy to see that we were going to have a labor shortage--and in fact it now exists. And people coming into the labor force from the schools were often functionally illiterate. The school system was not doing its job. But if the city had been economically depressed--there may not have been the incentive for business to do what it did.

For those in the Compact office, the booming economy with its multitude of entry level jobs only magnified the seriousness of the school system's deficiencies. Jim Darr told of walking through, on paper, the records of seniors in three high schools, which showed "incredibly obvious" academic deficiencies, even though the students had very positive personal skills:

> The schools felt themselves to be victims of circumstances in terms of the budget, their faculty, court orders, etcetera. In many ways, the headmaster really felt that he took all his orders from somewhere else. So in that context, you couldn't expect an individual school to raise itself by its own boot straps.

The headmaster's lack of authority to influence even their own staff's performance encouraged Compact staff to feel that it would have to be a basic part of the mission to engage the system in a broader way."

The Summer Jobs Program and the Jobs Collaborative Program were other significant pieces of ground that had been turned prior to the Compact. "We had had a very successful experience with the Summer Jobs Program starting in 1980," Edgerly reported. "It was very productive because it put non-school people in the schools and established stronger links with the private sector." As Paul Grogan, director of the city's Neighborhood Development and Employment Agency (NDEA), described it,

> We had a hard boiled practical program that was linked to attendance and effort in school. This was a real program. It was carefully set up and the jobs were of high quality. We got powerful people, important people to provide leadership. Because of this, the Summer Jobs Program was a success.

"This effort paved the way," Jim Darr believes. "It got high visibility in the companies and gave them the sense that this thing really worked because the kids can work." The success of the Summer Jobs Program was a major turning point in the citywide efforts to find jobs for teenagers. The first 125 kids selected city-wide to work were personable and literate, kids who would make the impression on business that the jobs staff wanted. "We discovered that inner city kids, while they might have a somewhat smaller store of general information and

experience compared to suburban kids, are otherwise just fine. And their supervisors found them fine and have enjoyed working with them," William Spring, Vice President of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston and President of the PIC, reported. "So this really has been a key event in establishing credibility with the private sector."

This success led the PIC to develop the in-school Jobs Collaborative Program. A year earlier, the PIC had approached the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation with the idea of starting a machinists training program for high school students. The Foundation said no to that idea, but was impressed with other things the PIC was doing and so sent its staff back to the drawing board. A few months later, they presented the Jobs Collaborative idea and the Clark Foundation bought it. By most accounts, it was the success of the Summer Jobs Program that led to the Jobs Collaborative idea. With foundation support behind it, the Jobs Collaborative was the first piece of what was to become the Boston Compact.

Social and political changes in Boston also helped the Compact: the city had lost its traditional constituency for the public schools. In ten years, system enrollment had declined from 92,000 to under 60,000 in 1982. Projections suggested an enrollment of 40,000 by 1995. These statistics reflected not only the demographic facts of life in Boston, but also the middle class' option to take up suburban living or shift their youngsters to the city's large parochial school system. According to Ed Doherty, Boston Teachers' Union president, only one family in 11 has a child in the Boston public schools; 27% of the city's school age children attend non-public, mostly parochial schools. "The electorate used to be people who used the schools. Now people want their tax dollars going to the fire and police departments." Boston School Superintendent Robert Spillane said that "as of 1981, there was absolutely no constituency for the schools. Bilingual parents were complaining, everyone was complaining." He needed a new group of school advocates, and the business community was the obvious target. "I wanted them to form a part of the effort to improve the Boston schools, so that if, for example, the school committee were to say, 'cut the budget by $20 million', it would be a real slap in the face to the business community." By filling the vacuum created by demographic shifts and population changes with executives of Boston's business community, the school system was embracing a constituency far more powerful than any other.

The city was also becoming less contentious about its schools. After years of nasty fighting over school busing, things had quieted down. "De-segregation had worn itself out as a passion," thought Bill Spring, vice-president of the Federal Reserve Bank. "For some reason, the candidates who appealed to racial divisiveness weren't elected in 1980." The five-member committee that did win office seemed less interested than predecessors in furthering their own careers, signaled in part by their selection of Spillane for the superintendent's job. He was the first unknown outsider appointed in eleven years--years during which nine people had held the job. Perhaps his appointment said something about the city's resident population as well. "They voted for the school committee that voted to bring in Spillane," Spring said, an indication that Boston's popular might be tired of fighting and ready to settle down for an honest look at the quality of their schools.

Spring and Morris also believed that the city's residents were beginning to realize that there were limits to what Federal Judge Arthur Garrity's court could do to influence educational improvement in Boston. People were used to the idea that the superintendent and school committee could not be counted on and so had placed their trust in the courts. But they were learning that though busing students and re-distributing resources could be mandated, school quality could not. The black community, in particular, began to realize that the Court had done about as much as it could do for Boston's schools.

The Boston school de-segregation case, despite the animosity and turmoil that it once produced, had an undeniably big hand in arranging the conditions that eventually led to the Compact's creation. According to Bob Schwartz, "We couldn't have gotten the city-wide agreements with the business community and the colleges without the six or seven years of working together under the court order." The Tri-Lateral Council was formed in the spring of 1974, shortly before Judge Garrity issued his liability findings on the schools. The business community had set up the Tri-lateral, in a sense, to get in under the umbrella of quality education in Boston that it seemed likely the court would push for. The willingness of the business community to work with the schools set a precedent that made it easy to approach the colleges. The four "masters" appointed by the Court to oversee de-segregation and the two court experts hit on the notion that since businesses had voluntarily paired with the high schools, why not go to the college presidents to see if they also would buy the idea of partnerships.

According to Schwartz, "It was a lot easier to approach the colleges once businesses were in place." Once the universities, too, had agreed, Judge Garrity then ordered the school system to cooperate. The partnerships did not happen by chance; many think that given a choice, the school system would have politely said 'thank you' and walked away. The court order forced the schools into collaboration, an opening of their doors to outsiders that previously was unthinkable in Boston's schools.

## THE BOSTON COMPACT
## PART B: DECISION

The Boston Compact's inaugural press conference became legendary even among the city's political mavins. It had convened the leaders of Boston's traditionally warring factions--the school department, the city administration, and the business community--to announce an unprecedented collaboration. What's more, negotiations that culminated in the formal signing of the agreement had been free of the usual turf struggles and public bickering between city agencies. The Compact was announced in a new and surprising atmosphere of unanimity and accord between the partners.

The people who developed the Compact concept and were instrumental in pulling together partners from the different sector were Robert Schwartz, former mayoral aide and executive director of the Compact; Jim Darr, executive director of the PIC; William Spring, vice-president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston; Al McMahill, staff director of the Compact; Ted Dooley of the PIC; Paul Grogan, head of the city's Neighborhood Development and Employment Agency (NDEA); Jim Caradonio of the Boston Public Schools, and Jane Morrison-Margulis of NDEA. They knew and trusted each other and had many years experience working together on youth employment issues. "The original people--the plotters and conspirators--we all knew each other. We had similar views, similar ends, a very long track record in public life, an accessibility to all the powers in town," Grogan said. McMahill and others agreed. "This was an example of what can happen when you get a group of people together who have known each other awhile. You've known one another in various disguises, so that you don't necessarily haul around your turf baggage with you."

Bill Spring, one of this core planning group, agreed but thought that their years of working on youth education and employment issues, some of them in Washington during the Carter Administration, was more important. They had just about crafted a new federal youth education and training bill when Carter lost, and in some sense they were doing the same kind of thing all over again in Boston. "Because we had worked together, we had a sense of what was possible, something that people in other cities may not have." Spring also believes that the personal styles and credibility of the Compact staff made it easier for

business leaders to deal with them, something that Dan Morley agrees with. He believes they were "successful intermediaries with business" because they were very business-like themselves in background and styles. They didn't seem like schoolpeople, whom many businessmen would prefer not to deal with.

The core group's efforts were helped by the dramatic show of leadership that the new superintendent, Robert Spillane, displayed immediately upon his arrival. According to Cay Stratton, who was executive director of the PIC at the time, the key event in Spillane's triumph was a presentation about the Compact to the Vault. His ability to convey his message in terms of management and bargains "provided an instant aura of credibility that no superintendent had in years, perhaps decades. Part of it was his presence, part of it was his credibility, and part of it was probably the sense of desperation that existed. 'If this person doesn't make it, what is going to happen to our schools?'"

Prior to Spillane's arrival in the summer of 1981, the business community had about given up on good management of the city's schools. According to Frank Morris, president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, "It was difficult for the business community to accomplish much with no leadership in the schools. We would ask the superintendents, 'How much money does the school system spend?' and they would say, 'I don't know.'"

Spillane quickly gained their confidence: he learned how much money he was spending; he introduced a number of accountability and management devices that appeared to give order to the system. He behaved more like a businessman, a style they trusted. The business community was impressed by Spillane's message that the schools were going to deliver on their basic responsibilities. They would teach kids to read and write. As Grogan observed, "It's not that Spillane is such a brilliant educator. It's that he's perceived as a strong leader, someone you can deal with. He's someone who handles himself extremely well with a sophisticated crowd." By all accounts, Robert Spillane's arrival considerably brightened the prospects for a more serious private sector commitment to the Boston schools.

Finally, the Compact idea sold in Boston because of several shrewd assessments of who could be pushed and how far. In drafting and developing consensus around the Compact document, the core group decided to forego broad-based participation, with its inevitable political maneuvering and haggling, in favor of speed and decisiveness. "It's always a tough choice whether to begin with something at the grassroots level and get a lot of participation...or, particularly

with something of this complexity, negotiate behind closed doors with a limited number of people and then deal with the flack you get from those who weren't included," Bob Schwartz admitted. The Compact staff felt they had to operate the latter way because the business community had little understanding of or tolerance for the process requirements of the public sector. "If we had said to the business leadership that in addition to having to negotiate with the superintendent, we have to go out and consult with 25 different community-based organizations and interest groups, they would have said, 'Hey, sorry...'" Staff also felt that securing the business community's commitment first would help to deliver the cooperation of other groups.

This strategy apparently worked, but not until some School Committee objections were overcome. "We were presented with it and told, 'Here, take it,'" Committeeman John O'Bryant recalled. It was put together by "the typical Boston group: white males. They didn't consult with the black community or anyone on the school committee," something that he found astonishing in light of the system's 75% minority enrollment. He and Jean McGuire, the other black committee member, told them that "we wouldn't personally sign off until the Compact included assurances that the percentage of minority youngsters employed would reflect their percentages in the school system. And so they were willing to write that in." Now O'Bryant thinks the Compact is "very worthwhile. I hear the companies are pleased. I think that this is the first experience many of them had had dealing with minority students. If it did one thing, it exposed business and industry to Boston's black kids."

Another group that might have thrown a monkey wrench was the Boston Teachers' Union, which at the time was "too busy." Ed Doherty explained that "As a union, we were deeply involved in contract negotiations and layoffs when the Compact was announced. Seven hundred-ten tenured teachers were laid off in 1981; 500 in 1982 and we were having contract negotiations." But later when the Jobs Collaborative Program expanded to other schools, the union did not fail to notice that the high schools' PIC career experience teachers were hired at a time when many classroom teachers were being "riffed," as the profession calls a reduction-in-force. "They were paid less than teachers and had fewer fringe benefits. But an agreement was reached with the PIC that preferences would go to laid-off teachers for those jobs." Doherty believes that the PIC career experience teachers are "doing guidance work...we could have said that they ought

to get full guidance counselor salary and benefits. But we were told unequivocally that if we put up a fuss, they simply wouldn't go into the budget."

But at the time, the union had "no major objections to the Compact. The schools need money to operate and that's tax money. If business is lobbying against the schools or being silent, it doesn't get legislators to vote favorably. If business cooperates, its easier to get money from elected officials." Doherty also likes the Compact's goals. "They're ones that no one can object to: improved attendance, jobs for the kids, reducing drop-outs, increasing college attendance. They are simply and clearly spelled out." Cay Stratton believes that attaching numbers to these goals and putting it in the form of a bargain was essential to win wide endorsement for the Compact. "This concept was easy for the business community and the public to understand. When you talk about school improvement as a bargain, it's less abstract. They can grab it. Business people do not relate to terms like 'institutional change'."

With this set of actors and institutions on board, then, the Compact was accepted and the ceremonial signing took place on September 22, 1982. It seemed destined for a bright future and with it, a brighter future for Boston's youngsters. Its supporters included the best and the brightest of Boston's business and education communities who knew what they had to deliver, and a flashy new superintendent determined to shake lethargy from the system and replace headmasters with people who cared. Even the Boston press was on the right side, calling it "the most exciting plan ever put together to benefit the city's public school children." (Globe, November 18, 1982). Neil R. Pierce, a syndicated columnist writing for the Globe said, "What makes it noteworthy (and worthy of emulation in other cities) is the serious long-term commitment of all the players, the measurable goals all can grasp, and the extending of the new era of public-private partnerships." (November 28, 1982).

## THE BOSTON COMPACT
## PART C: IMPLEMENTATION

People who worked on the Boston Compact viewed it as more than just a set of agreements between the business community and the public schools. "I characterize this as something of a high school assistance office," said Bob Schwartz, the Compact's Executive Director. "There's a group of people looking out for the high schools, hustling the resources they want, being their advocates...We're also a bunch of people making demands on them." Jim Caradonio, who heads education and employment for the Boston schools, thinks the Compact has become a "collective bargaining agent for kids" working on behalf of those "who traditionally never got anything." Others see it as a vehicle for convening diverse groups in the city. "You don't just put institutions next to each other and expect that they'll work. There have to be these bridges. There have to be forums to talk," says Al McMahill, staff director of the Compact. Ed Doherty, Boston Teachers' Union president, calls it "a recognized forum whereby educators can sit down with business and college representatives to talk about elementary and secondary school problems. It simply is a positive force in this community."

Inside the schools, people see it slightly differently. The new headmaster of Dorchester High School, Stan Swartz, says that at the district and city level, the Compact is "a public relations tool." But as a school principal, he uses it as "an administrative tool" for working with department heads on curriculum and school goals. Craig Williams, PIC career experience teacher (CET) in Swartz's school, says that it's leverage--leverage to put pressure on kids to shape up, leverage on resources from local businesses. Karen Williams, Compact development officer at Jamaica Plain High School, also sees it as leverage, but it's more than that in her view. "A good way to think of the Compact is 'planning.' It redirected us in the right areas, forced us to sit down and plan and strategize and really get down to work."

For the man who endorsed, promoted and went on the stump for the Compact, the Boston school superintendent Robert Spillane, it's a "political coalition builder. I use the Compact to legitimize coalition and constituency building." He does not think the Compact is about jobs; he doesn't care about

the big financial contributions local businesses have made to the schools. "You can throw that away. The most important thing is that it has opened lines of communication with the business community. It has made them advocates for the schools." John O'Bryant, a Boston School Committee member who first fought over the Compact and went on to become one of Spillane's big fans, said, "It's like apple pie and motherhood: any committee would have voted for it." According to Ted Dooley of the PIC, "The extent to which (people) see the Compact as a program is the extent to which they have already limited its potential influence...I think for a lot of educators it's not clear what the Compact is offering and not clear what the Compact really is."

These different hopes for the Compact influenced the way that people went about implementing it in the district office and in the schools. Early in 1983, a Compact Office was formally established and Bob Schwartz and Al McMahill, who were loaned by the Center for Public Service at Brandeis University to consult with the Superintendent, were hired as Executive Director and Staff Director, respectively. While the office was housed in the school department headquarters on Court Street, it was not an official department program, but a "quasi-autonomous body." Schwartz claims that this was done for two reasons:

> One was symbolism in terms of the outside. We had to say that this was a priority and that 'Swartz reports to the Superintendent.' The second, was that given the way bureaucracies work, if you've got three deputies (superintendents), if you work for one of them, you have a hard time getting the other two to cooperate... At critical points, getting a memo from the superintendent to the headmasters, getting his weight behind us, made a difference.

With the Compact's implementation mandated for each school, and an office established to oversee it, the difficult work in the schools began in earnest. What was important now was to generate enough enthusiasm among administrators, teachers and students so that Compact goals could be addressed at the classroom level. Speaking of the importance of having Boston educators accept the Compact as a school improvement effort, Al McMahill said, "We viewed this as the ultimate test. If you're trying to change things and classrooms don't change, then nothing ever changes."

The Compact first sought out people who could represent the various aspects of the Compact in each school. Explains McMahill, "We first identified people

called Compact liaisons over the Spring of 1983. We basically told each headmaster that they had to identify someone within their building to work with the [Compact] office on the implementation of activities." These liaisons, who later were called development officers, were to assist the headmasters in trying strategies that would begin to meet the Compact goals. As school staff, rather than Compact employees, each defined the position differently, a function of the skills they brought to the job, the needs of each school, and what the headmaster wanted them to do. Says Karen Williams, the development officer at Jamaica Plain High School, "My job is to get the Compact in, get people to own it, believe in it and get involved in it." According to Bill Fitzgerald, the development officer at Dorchester High School, they work with all members of the faculty, "I report to the headmaster but I deal with everyone in the school. The nature of this job is to get along with people at all levels.. you can't be viewed as administration by faculty. They want to deal with you on a peer level. It's the same with administrators. It's almost a unique position, where I'm not evaluating people, I'm working with them. I basically supervise no one, but work with everyone."

In some cases, development officers provide a link with the school's business partner, coordinate the activities of outside agency representatives who might be providing services to the school, or recruit new students. In other schools, they might work closely with teachers to integrate the Compact's goals into the classroom teaching process. For the most part, their specific job duties depend upon the specific objectives of each school and the wishes of the headmaster. Al McMahill says that "many of these people felt that their job was to do and be the Compact in their building."

At the same time that the development officers were being identified, the PIC continued to expand its Jobs Collaborative Program, moving from the original three high schools to fourteen. This program provided students with career preparation and part-time jobs and was a driving force behind the conceptual design of the Compact agreement. Its expansion allowed the PIC to add "Career Experience Teachers" in each of the schools. These individuals taught career development classes, and prepared students for summer jobs, part-time jobs during the school year and permanent positions upon graduation. In addition, they spent part of their time contacting businesses that had signed the Compact pledge, establishing relationships with them, and cultivating jobs and other sources.

Those at the Compact office and the PIC thought that if the Compact was to have any hope of being accepted by administrators and teachers in the schools, it needed to pay particular attention to the culture and climate of each building so that the new development officers and career specialists would be accepted. Says Ted Dooley, "What we did was approach the schools like an anthropologist approaches a culture. You have to go in and learn the lay of the land, the language, the concepts... We've really earned our credibility by knowing the day to day business of the headmaster and the faculty. We've gone in and worked with them at their own level."

One way this was accomplished was in the decision to hire laid-off teachers for the career experience teacher positions. Individuals who, according to Jim Darr, "...had worked in those schools before, who could be recommended by the headmasters. For political reasons, we want to relay a message that we were sensitive to the tensions in the system... We were not aware at the time how valuable that would be to us."

One political benefit of this decision was that it served to establish friendly relations with the Boston Teachers' Union. At a time when there was considerable passion regarding teacher lay-offs, the hiring of "riffed" teachers helped the union buy into the Compact.

According to Darr, other benefits were more practical: "They brought us an ability ... to get schedules changed and help maneuver kids through the system so that they'd be available for our activities. This was more than we ever could have done." Dooley added, "At one school, our staff person can get things done that the superintendent couldn't get done."

Finally, the hiring of many former teachers helped make the Compact credible to both the headmaster and teachers in the schools. It helped instill a degree of ownership in the program. "We've never made any bones about the fact that the development officers don't work for us. They work for headmaster", Al McMahill explained. "There's no question about that." Regarding the PIC positions, Dooley remarked, "We approached (the schools) and said 'this is your program, your staff, your position. These people report to us but they also report to you'." To illustrate this, Dooley related how "...in a few schools where we put people, they were not necessarily the very best we could have hired. But they were the best people for those situations because they were strongly connected with the headmaster. They had been in the schools before."

As people representing the Compact began moving into each school, it became clear that there was a need for some mechanism to help the schools begin to address the Compact's goals. Initially, this was the role of "workgroups." These workgroups, which emanated from the Compact Steering Committee and were comprised of a cross section of school constituencies, were led by a school department official and a senior staff member of an appropriate agency. Each workgroup was set up to address a specific issue connected to the compact goals: guidance counseling, higher education awareness and career counseling; alternative education; job development; remedial education/basic skills; arts; interscholastic and intramural athletics; curriculum development; career and vocational education; computer literacy; research and evaluation; and school management assistance. Some, particularly the job development and higher education awareness and career counseling workgroups, are still part of the implementation strategy, while others expired or never got off the ground.

The use of cross-school workgroups to address the Compact's goals was not the original choice of Compact planners. They had wanted planning teams to work within schools, to which Compact staff would provide technical assistance. But initially, the Superintendent didn't agree. Bob Schwartz, then a consultant, remembers:

> In June of '82, when it came time to make a proposal to the Superintendent for budgetary support during the 1982-83 school year, I submitted a proposal which had three parts to it. One part of it was to begin to work intensively with three schools on a pilot basis in the area of school-level planning and development. The memo got returned to me with that whole part of it crossed out, as if to say, 'we don't need that.'

While both Schwartz and McMahill went along with the idea of workgroups, they were sure that problems would arise, along with a need to redesign the planning approach. McMahill explains:

> What I did was put together as many workgroups as I could, support them as best I could and...sure enough it wasn't too far down the road that people began scratching their heads and saying 'but we don't have the constituencies in the schools. We don't have a clear sense of what the schools need.' At that point I went out to the schools and formed our local school planning effort in the summer of 1983. That's when we finally started to do our constituency building in the schools.

This effort at constituency building became known as the Summer Planning Institute, an important developmental milestone for the Compact.

**The 1983 Summer Planning Institute**

In the original Compact agreement, it was specified that the schools would not be judged on their performance during the 1982-83 school year. Rather, this would be a period of planning, a time to develop pre-conditions for successful entry into the schools. The Summer Planning Institute of 1983, in the opinion of most Compact observers, was critical to entry and in many ways served as a kick-off to school-based Compact activities.

By the Summer of 1983, a number of critical factors had occurred in the planning process of the Compact. First, people were now in place who could represent the Compact with the schools. Second, the Jobs Collaborative Program, which had involved three schools during the past school year, had been very successful. These two factors combined to enhance the Compact's credibility in at least those schools. Stan Swartz, Headmaster of Dorchester High School observed:

> There were a lot of skeptics as to whether they [the Compact] were going to deliver the jobs but the...PIC was very effective and hired school people; people who know the schools and know the politics and chemistry of the school system. I'd way the marriage between the PIC and the public schools has been a very effective one. There is a good communication between them and the School Department and I think this has helped facilitate the success of the program.

Another factor enhancing the Compact's credibility was the success of the 1983 Summer Jobs Program. While the previous summer's program had done extremely well, the signing of the Compact had created more jobs and was viewed very positively by the schools. It was an indication that the business community was indeed taking its Compact pledge seriously.

Finally, the high schools, by mid-summer 1983, had undergone substantial reorganization. Nearly half of the 17 headmasters and a number of department heads had been replaced. There was a feeling in the school system that Spillane was making the high schools a high priority in his administration and that headmasters would be held accountable for school performance. According to one

assistant headmaster, "There was a feeling that Spillane meant business."

Headmasters and other representatives of each high school met for the 1983 Summer Planning Institute at The University of Massachusetts, Boston campus for eight full days. The Institute was to allow school representatives to get together, away from the school building, to devise a written plan that would spell out how each school would address the Compact's goals during the up-coming school year. Days were structured so that the mornings were devoted to workshops on effective practices that might meet those goals, given by practitioners currently working in the Boston schools. As McMahill points out, "In many cases, workshop speakers got up out of the audience and came forward to present--only a few 'wingtips' were brought in from the outside." Some of these 'wingtips' were consultant specialists in areas such as school and curriculum planning. But most of the workshop presenters were Boston practitioners who were deliberately utilized to signal that there was indeed a sense of faith and confidence in the schools' staff, and that there were resources in the system that could be tapped.

In the afternoons, schools met individually in order to produce school plans. Says Jane Morrison-Margulis, "It was the first time anybody paid attention to individuals within the high schools and said 'why don't you put down on paper your plans for the school.' During the Institute, people had time to plan and they were away from the distraction of their schools."

According to Stacy Johnson, headmaster of Jamaica Plain High School, "The Summer Planning group put pressure on people. It put pressure on them to put things on paper and devise a game plan." Yet, because this was a new process, pressure and full participation came slowly to some. To some extent Spillane's presence and not so gentle encouragement helped foster this acceptance. Explains Jim Caradonio:

> The headmasters at our first Summer Institute had to show up with a plan and run planning meetings. I remember in the beginning some didn't take it seriously so the Superintendent came to the meetings and put their feet to the fire. And boy the next day they were busy!

Besides getting school personnel to actively sit down and plan programs for the upcoming year, the Summer Institute had another purpose: it allowed the organizers of the Compact to set what they believed should be the tone for the future. Says McMahill:

> We made the schools three promises in the summer of 1983. The first promise was that the Compact was not going to go away and neither were we. The second promise was that we had an ideological approach that we were not going to deviate from.

This ideological approach involved a strong belief that institutional change must involve bottom-up planning and must instill a sense of ownership to participants. Continuing, McMahill added that "the third promise was that we made no promises. We promised them no quick fix. We promised them long hard fights."

At the conclusion of the Summer Institute, schools had developed written plans delineating their procedures for attacking the Compact's objectives. These plans were not "how-to" guides but were more general in nature, listing objectives, delegating responsibilities and establishing timelines for their achievement. The quality of the plans, according to Ted Dooley, may have reflected the commitment of each headmaster. While some welcomed the plans as a powerful tool for plotting the future of their schools, others "pay lip service...and go about business as they always did." However, even in those schools where administrators took the planning process seriously there remained the question of how to sell the plans and ideas to those who were the most important players on the field: the Boston public high school teachers.

**The Compact in Jamaica Plain and Dorchester High Schools**

Both Jamaica Plain and Dorchester High School are characterized by Ted Dooley as "stars" of the Compact; they may not reflect the experiences of all or even most of the Boston High Schools. Yet the experiences of these two schools permit a look at how the Compact went about its integration process.

Reflecting on the initial planning process begun at the 1983 Summer Institute, Karen Williams, the development officer at Jamaica Plain High School, sees a significant flaw. For all the talk of bottom-up planning and participation, the written plans were, for the most part, authored by administrative personnel. "Quite frankly," said Williams, "the way the Compact was put upon the schools by Court Street, it was difficult to generate any ownership." Facing the plan in September 1983, teachers' response was "Oh, you've got a plan? You do it!" Bill Fitzgerald, Dorchester's development officer, paints the same picture of that first year: "We had to sell it [that] year...some people somehow associated in their mind that the central administration wanted to impose upon them and infringe on

their contract. [Teachers' initial] response was, 'Oh sure, I'll do this for you.' I don't think they took this seriously at all." According to one Dorchester teacher, this response could be at least partly attributed to the fact that only administrative personnel had been involved at the Summer Planning Institute. Classroom teachers had not been consulted nor did they influence its outcome.

During the first year, there was a conscious effort to make department heads and teachers aware of the contents of the new plans and to promote the concept of the Compact. At Jamaica Plain, Karen Williams says that she began "quietly monitoring each step of the plan. You know, things like [saying to teachers] 'What's happening? How's it going? Remember the Compact!' I really did a lot of individual public relations. I don't think there was anyone who would say that they were unaware that there was a plan. They may not have memorized it or known exactly what was in it, but they knew there was a plan."

Department heads at Dorchester were all given a copy of the plan and asked to review it and make suggestions about possible revisions. According to Fitzgerald, many of the suggestions were incorporated into the final document. He adds: "I think we convinced people. We sold them that this was a plan with realistic goals...and that we also wanted their input. [We] showed everyone that this was a living document and that nothing was etched in stone."

At both schools, the final thaw came as a result of student progress which many attributed to the Compact. What is interesting is that in one school this progress revolved around academic achievements; on the other hand, changed attitudes were the result of the jobs programs. In the case of Jamaica Plain, Williams believes that the first indication that the teachers were being won over was the end of the year testing results. "We jumped up to the number two school in the district, a jump in average score of over 20 points. And people like success. They like to be part of success. This was the first time that the school as a whole said, "Wow, maybe this is not so bad! Maybe this Compact idea and the fact that we are all working towards the same goal is not so bad'."

Dorchester teachers were impressed by both the quantity and quality of the jobs offered through the Jobs Collaborative Program and particularly the Summer Jobs Programs. They saw that students were responding in great numbers to the programs, that the PIC was ready and willing to deliver jobs. This was particularly true in the case of the New England Telephone Company, Dorchester's business partner for the last 15 years. While the company had traditionally

provided a variety of resources to the school, there was never any sign of interest in hiring Dorchester students. This changed under the Compact. According to Bill Fitzgerald, the development officer who had been the school's company contact from the start, the Compact was the "wedge that allowed the kids to get in." Prior to the Compact's school-business agreement, only three Dorchester students had ever been placed at New England Bell. In the 1983 summer, that number rose to 23 and the next summer it nearly doubled. According to Craig Williams, teachers have seen many students motivated by their experiences in these jobs:

> The Summer Jobs Program [has] served as a signal to both teachers and kids that good things are happening... The word is out now. [As] time progresses, teachers have really been integrating the program into what they do. They see that we've placed over 100 kids in summer jobs. The program [went] through a legitimation process and the teachers give it a lot of support;...they play a large part and reinforce what I do.

Stan Swartz, Dorchester's headmaster confirmed this, saying: "we put together a plan...and people might have been reluctant to buy into it, but when the PIC began to deliver the jobs and the students began to realize that this thing was working, the teachers jumped on the bandwagon."

As a new round of planning began in the spring of 1984, the various departments in each school went about the business of reviewing previous plans and preparing updates. At Jamaica Plain, Karen Williams was impressed with the tenor of the meetings and believes that they reflect the change in teacher attitudes towards planning. She illustrates this with one account of a business department meeting:

> The questions that teachers asked were good questions, and I think it really got the department head to take the Compact much more seriously than she had. They wanted to know why: 'Why can't we produce kids who can type 145 words per minute? Why can't kids type after having typing three years?' They put [the department head] on the spot. I was not there to make her uncomfortable, but if I had asked those questions it would have come across differently than had the teachers asked them. And that was great. They were saying, 'We need a plan, what do we do?'

This serious approach to planning was rewarded during the next school year, as both schools continued to add to their accomplishments. Year-end standardized

test results indicated that student scores had again risen in most curricular areas. Jamaica Plain and Dorchester were included among 26 statewide schools recognized by the Massachusetts Board of Education for excellence in school desegregation. Jamaica Plain received a two-year Carnegie Corporation School Improvement Grant to implement an innovative alternative English and history program and a staff development program. Dorchester got a public commendation from the governor for its Compact Ventures Program, which provides additional, intensive support services for 9th grade students. Visitors from around the country have flocked to both schools to learn how the Compact works at the building level.

Public recognition reinforced the importance and value of long range planning. In both schools, planning is now an on-going process, not a quick year-end task. For example, Karen Williams indicated that in February 1985, when it became apparent that Jamaica Plain would have difficulty achieving a goal of 85% daily attendance, the attendance committee reorganized their strategies to better attack the problem. Staff conducted a phoning blitz, calling students' homes on days they were absent. There was also stricter enforcement of a school department policy which makes subject failure mandatory after 15 days of unexcused absences. Across the school, there is agreement that attendance will be an important theme in next year's plan.

At Dorchester, on-going reviews of the 1984-85 plan also resulted in a clearer sense of direction. Three subcommittees were formed to address a possible restructuring of the school's schedule, ways of improving school communication and school discipline. In April, these committees reported back to the planning team with ideas for the 1985-86 year's plan. A decision was made to concentrate resources on four approaches to the dropout issue: a division of the school year into semesters, so that students who had made insufficient progress in attendance or academics could start the second half of the year with a clean slate; a new school social worker would develop outside support services for high-risk students; a peer advisory and peer tutoring program that paired new and "veteran" student help with academic and social transition problems; and finally, expansion to the 9th and 10 grades of the successful Compact Ventures Program, which provides academic, social and emotional support to high risk students. Principal Stan Swartz and planning team members believed that these measures would help sustain the progress they had made in keeping Dorchester students in school.

Significant to the planning progress of both Jamaica Plain and Dorchester have been the contributions made by their respective university liaisons: Ann DePlacido from UMass/Boston a d Bard Hamlen from Simmons College. Each has helped administrators and teachers develop programs that are either now operating or in the planning stages: helping one of the headmasters to assemble a strong administrative team; working with department heads to infuse basic skills instruction into curriculum areas; assisting with program evaluations and helping staff identify outside support services for students. According to Marilyn Corsini, assistant headmaster at Jamaica Plain, Hamlen as served as "a sounding board for [the headmaster] and me, often helping us expand on some of our ideas." She was instrumental in conceptualizing the project and writing for the Carnegie grant; she helped the English and History Departments implement the alternative teaching strategies proposed in the grant.

Change has been reported in both Jamaica Plain and Dorchester High schools, at least in the way the Compact planning process has been absorbed into the operation of the schools. Al McMahill distinguishes between schools that "have it" and those that don't:

> Schools that 'have it' have integrated the notion that 'it's not the Compact's plan, its the school's plan.' Those schools that treat doing the Compact plan as a compliance exercise rather than as a means within their own building of clarifying, cohesion, direction and moving forward, those schools don't have it.

By McMahill's standards, Jamaica Plain and Dorchester are examples of schools that "have it."

There may be some speculation, however, as to why they "have it." While no one questions that schools are planning more and working toward specific goals, some question whether they identify this process with the Compact. Phil Moskoff, career experience teacher at Jamaica Plain, says:

> I'm not sure that if you took 10 Jamaica Plain High School teachers, put them in a room and asked them what the Boston Compact was, that all 10 would know about it. But they would know me and what I do. If teachers view something as working, they get interested in it and they don't really care what it's called. People around here know I work for the PIC. They know that the PIC implements a job program. If you ask them what my relationship is to the Compact, they might not know.

According to Joseph Casey, chairman of the English and Language Arts Department at Dorchester, teachers spend a good deal of time in projects which address issues identified with the Compact, such as increasing daily attendance and bolstering basic skills. He adds, however, that "my perception is, no, the average classroom teacher does not have a lot of knowledge about the Compact."

One headmaster at a school not closely aligned with the Compact, believes that for the most part, teachers see the Compact as a jobs program rather than one of school improvement, adding that "for all intents and purposes, the Jobs Collaborative IS the Boston Compact!"

Perhaps Marilyn Corsini puts the issue of recognition into perspective. She believes that there has been substantial movement in shifting the responsibility for planning from the school administration to the teachers. "I look at the integration of the Compact in phases. In the beginning, planning was primarily done by the administration, but right now we're in Phase II, with the department heads taking a lot of responsibility for developing the plan." Her feeling is that in phase three, teachers will take an even greater role in the planning process and increase their recognition of what the Compact is doing in the schools.

Still, no matter what the degree of actual recognition by the average classroom teacher, the fact remains that at least in those schools that "have it," there is a much greater degree of school-wide planning and faculty participation than ever before; there has been change. And this, after all, is the primary goal of the Compact. As McMahill points out, these schools "...will never approach a problem quite the same way again. Planning won't be something that happens because someone else tells them it has to happen. It will happen because they won't think about doing it any other way." In the end, adds McMahill, "what we really want is change, not fame."

## THE BOSTON COMPACT
## PART D: RESULTS

In three years, the Boston Compact became a national success story, attracting scores of visitors eager to learn about how to begin similar ventures in their own cities. Countless newspaper and journal articles touted the Compact's success as a groundbreaking youth employment program and a model public-private partnership. Several major U.S. cities, backed by federal and foundation funding, began to replicate the Compact with technical assistance provided by the Boston staff.

The Compact also received glowing reviews in Boston, which helped it recruit other partners. Within two years after the business-education agreements were signed, the Compact was expanded by agreements with the higher education community and the Boston Trade Unions Council. The Boston trade unions agreed to set aside 5% of their apprenticeship positions annually for qualified Boston high school graduates. Twenty-five Boston area colleges and schools of higher education agreed to enroll 25% more Boston public school graduates through 1988, and to assist the schools in strengthening their college preparatory curriculum. The colleges also agreed to increase financial aide for local youngsters and to develop support services to help them remain in college. Some of the Compact's framers envision an even greater number of participants and agreements as time passes: museums, cultural organizations, social service agencies and health care providers.

The partners' original goals were largely met over three years, with business exceeding most of its original goals. Over 500 businesses participated in the Compact, well over the 300 promised by 1984. The Summer Jobs Program, which was the piece of the Compact that first demonstrated the potential for a school-business partnership linking jobs and education, promised that 200 companies would provide 750 jobs in 1982 and 1,000 the following year. During the 1986 summer, 614 companies hired 2,591 Boston high school students. The year-round Job Collaborative Program, which along with the Summer Job Program is run by the Boston PIC, grew from 274 students and 3 full-time job developers in three high schools in 1982 to 1,046 students and job developers in 12 of the cities 14 comprehensive high schools by 1985.

The priority hiring of Boston high school graduates was slated to begin with 200 companies and 400 students. In the program's first year, 316 companies hired 607 graduates of the class of 1984. The following year, 306 companies hired 823 graduates of the class of 1985--nearly 28% of the graduating class. According to staff at the Boston PIC, which manages company recruitment and job placement for the Compact, priority hiring is beginning to "scrape against the ceiling" in terms of the numbers of students who need help getting jobs. Although the business community offered to deliver 1,000 jobs in 1985 as promised, only 823 Boston graduates needed help in finding jobs. The PIC, curious to know what was happening to graduates after high school, did a six month follow-up study of the 2,978 graduates of the class of 1985 and found only 105 who were out of work. The PIC promptly found jobs for those who wanted one and brought the jobless rate for that class down to 4.5%--a remarkable unemployment rate for recent graduates in a city like Boston.

To put Boston's success in context, the U.S. Bureau of Labor statistics reports that the national unemployment rate for June 1985 high school graduates was 19.8% and 50.3% for white and black graduates respectively. A more useful measure that includes the entire cohort, including those not officially searching for work and thus not considered officially unemployed--the employment/population ratio--produces more discouraging but meaningful results nationwide. In March 1986, 49% of 1985 graduates in large U.S. central cities were employed and 33.6% of black members.[2]

The PIC's survey also found that 59% of the class of 1985 graduates were employed, a higher fraction than for other large cities. For blacks, it was 60%, nearly double the national average. Moreover, discrepancies between black and white employment rates in Boston were far lower: the difference was two percentage points as against 25 percentage points that separated whites from blacks in other cities.[3]

In signing the Boston Compact, the Boston Public School Department pledged a 5% annual improvement in several areas: school attendance, the drop-out rate,

---

2 This analysis was conducted by Professor Andrew Sum, Center for Labor Market Studies, Northeastern University, and is reported in Spring, W.J., "Youth Unemployment and the Transition from School to Work", New England Economic Review, March/April 1987, pp. 3-16.

3 Ibid., p. 5.

college placement, and job placement after graduation. The school district also promised to produce high school graduates who were at least minimally competent in math and reading by 1986. Three years later, the School Department's scorecard showed mixed results.

Since 1983, attendance rates in the high school have gone up from 80.7% to 84.5% in 1985. Student performance on the standardized Metropolitan Achievement Test rose from a median percentile of 38% in reading and 35% in math in 1983 to 45% in reading and 47% in math in 1985. That is, half of Boston students reading scores were below the 45th percentile and half were above it in 1985, indicating a seven point improvement, but average results for the district that were still below the national average.

The one area of school performance that has thus far shown no improvement and that has in fact worsened, is the drop-out rate. There is no widely agreed upon formula used to determine drop-out rates, but Boston's approach looks at grade cohorts between grades 9 and 12 and accounts for those who left. If they joined the military or enrolled in another school, they are not classified as drop-outs. Even so, for the graduating class of 1981, the drop-out rate between grades nine when they entered high school and grade twelve when they graduated was 36%. It rose for the next year's class to 38%, rose to 41% for the class of '83, and rose again the following year to 43% for the class of '84. The Honorable Julian T. Houston, speaking at a conference on Boston dropouts, noted that since 1980, the number of dropouts from the Boston public schools has been steadily increasing, from roughly 2,000 for the 1980-81 school year to over 3,000 for the school year 1984-85.

There are other, less quantifiable indications that the Compact is getting its message across. Craig Williams of Dorchester High School says that businesses have "...changed the way they look at Boston school students... They don't see them anymore as having basic discipline problems. They know now that we have good kids." According to Phil Moskoff at Jamaica Plain High School,

> [The Compact] works far better than I imagined. The combination of putting kids in a work situation with counseling and school work had a great effect. It has increased attendance and done a myriad of other things. For students the Compact shows...the longitudinal picture, that there is a connection between school and work. Seeing this in real life does more to put pressure on kids than anything teachers can say. For teachers, it has made life considerably easier. It has made discipline problems less. And it has helped in that a lot of kids who didn't see a concrete value in education, now do.

Ed Doherty, President of the Boston Teachers' Union, offered a powerful perspective on how teachers feel about the Compact:

> I've been working here in the union office for 10 years, and if something is not working well in the schools we always hear about it. If a program is in trouble or people are unhappy, they call the union and blast us for not protecting them. They let off steam. But I can't think of one call that we've had complaining about the Compact.

Reflecting on the Compact in the schools, Ted Dooley thinks it has worked well in some schools and not others. He says that "the schools are very different. Some schools will say that there has been no change at all, that the Compact is all smoke and mirrors. Other schools will really point to significant change."

Many believe that the success of the Summer Jobs Program and the rapid expansion of the Job Collaborative Program right after the Compact was signed were instrumental in producing change. They got the attention of district administrators and school staff. They indicated to the schools that the business community would produce jobs, and that would motivate students. According to Dan Morley, "The Compact didn't invent (the Summer Job Program), but it did give it life and visibility....Some think that a summer job and a guarantee of a job after school will justify kids staying in school. I hope that's right!" The two jobs programs that the Compact subsumed were intended to get kids jobs and show the schools that the Compact could deliver. The business commitment to provide jobs was a way to keep them invested in the public school system.

But jobs were only a minor theme of the Compact's agenda. Darr said that he "always felt that in terms of the impact of the Compact in the first two years, the business community's side would be much more important than the school's side, but that it would decline and should decline, relative to the school's side of it." The role of the jobs program is to raise everyone's expectations, and that once that occurs, school improvement can more easily follow. "What the [Compact] really does inside the school, is that it has an impact on the school's climate. More than the impact on individual students, it's the changing sense of expectations that kids find and discover when they enter the building. Preaching job results actually has an impact on more kids going to college, because it

changes the overall climate of what to expect and raises the level of what to expect." What the Compact is supposed to strengthen are the relationships between teachers, students and administrators; the perceptions students have of themselves and what they can achieve academically and vocationally; and the quality of the education in each school.

The numbers of students employed through the Jobs Collaborative is still relatively small at under 100 per school, though the numbers are growing. In a few years, fully 40% of each graduating class will have had some exposure to the Jobs Collaborative. And the schools are beginning to feel the effect of other resources from the business community. Still, the incentives for schools to buy into the Compact's planning process are less clear. Dorchester High School Headmaster Stan Swartz allowed that there were many skeptics among his colleagues, "waiting to see the [Compact's] track record" before they joined in. But even though the Compact's planning process was required of all schools, Swartz also thought that it fit well in Dorchester because the school already had a good relationship with their business partner, New England Telephone. People at Dorchester High were familiar with business partners, liked what they offered, and were used to outsiders in their school.

Stacy Johnson, headmaster at Jamaica Plain High School believed the Compact "was the right idea that came at the right time. I saw the Compact as leverage and I saw it as a plus. I bought into the philosophy of the Compact and it gave me some leverage to do the things I wanted to do. It provided me with some backing."

Headmasters like Stan Swartz and Stacy Johnson found incentives in the Compact's ability to help them further their own school plans. But when school heads fail to make that connection, have plans they prefer to carry out their own way, or lack plans altogether, it is not clear what course the Compact will follow. Al McMahill thinks that tough-minded incentives may be called for:

> We've got some more schools to bring along. But that's where the line structure has got to come in and say, 'hey, it's a new day, and you're either going to do some things some new ways, or you're going to have to find some other work to do!" Now, if the system won't do that, then I think it's undercutting itself. It will be interesting to see what happens.

Incentives for classroom teachers may be even more important. Some say

that teachers have been impressed by better attendance rates and higher test scores, and their morale has improved. But it is doubtful that improved morale alone can reform the school system. It is one important ingredient without question. But school improvement ultimately rests on better teaching and teachers need their own opportunities to improve through in-service training and new curricula that they want to use. These ingredients thus far are missing.

Developing incentives for headmasters and teachers to take seriously the Compact's school improvement goals is ultimately intended to improve student performance. In the last few years, many more Boston students have gone to school more regularly. And over time, regular attendance combined with a regular job may convince many more that staying in school is better than the alternative. But simply clocking hours in school will not overcome many youngster's very real academic deficiencies. Jim Caradonio believes that "the biggest problem is still the area of basic skills. If there's any weakness in the Compact, it's not in its approach, but in its ability to tackle this problem." Jim Darr concurs: "On the substantive side, the greatest storm cloud is around the basic skills that kids enter 9th grade with, and the relative inability of the high schools so far to change that." The Compact, through the Boston PIC, has recently moved to extend remedial work back to the 9th grade, and before he left, the former superintendent told the business community of the system's need for reading teachers in all of its middle schools. That will help younger students, but the Compact needs a short term strategy for assisting youngsters who have made it to high school without having mastered rudimentary math and reading skills. Such strategies exist, but they're labor intensive and expensive. Dealing with the problem of deficient basic skills is perhaps the biggest challenge the Compact faces. The school system must deliver on its side of the business-education bargain; the question is how much time does it have to do it?

The Compact faces other challenges as well, mainly the result of its very success and survival. One of the great ironies of American education is that successful programs that catch the public's eye have a hard time keeping it. Interest moves on to other things, yet that interest and what it brought to the program are vital to its success and survival. The Compact must find a way to maintain the business community's involvement in the face of other public demands on its resources. As William Edgerly observed in 1985, "Business is now reviewing its relationship with the Compact, trying to evaluate our alternatives

for going forward, to focus our efforts in fewer ways so that resources can be applied effectively and collaboratively...There is a sense among all of us CEOs that we have a project that is successful, and we want to maintain it."

A year ago, many people seemed to think that the way to maintain the Compact was by institutionalizing it. But they had different points of view about which aspects of the Compact should be institutionalized. Most agreed that the business-school relationship, the jobs and the school improvement process should become a permanent fixture in Boston. They disagreed about who ought to support and manage the Compact. "Then [the school district] can re-juggle its budgets and pay for the staff." Morley thought that the program should become the long-term responsibility of the school system, not of business, who will want to move on to other things. "I think it will never be successful if business has to fund it. It's the kind of test program that can be supported at the start from the outside, but it must be incorporated into the school system"

Among the school people, O'Bryant agreed with Morley, but wanted to wait a while before the Compact became the responsibility of the school department alone. "From a logistical standpoint, I don't think anybody should be anything for a year or two. We need to develop confidence in the system so that chief executive officers will feel comfortable working with schoolpeople...[Then] it must be institutionalized, otherwise it is too vulnerable to being cut." Spillane disagreed with this view and said flatly that the Compact can "never" be organizationally incorporated into the school department, believing that if this happened, the support of the PIC, the main conduit to the business community, would be lost. Jane Morrison-Margulis explained that for this reason institutionalization "can't and shouldn't [happen]. This will take the clout out. The Compact is a combination of internal and external services. It is not a school department program and never will be."

Nevertheless, in winter 1985 when research for this case was conducted, many people pointed to evidence that the Compact was becoming an accepted way of life for some of the partners.[4] William Spring observed that "there is now a cadre of people at the Federal Reserve Bank who take it for granted that one of

---

4 This case study of the Boston Compact covers its first three years, September 1982 - June 1985. Interviews were completed during the fall of 1984 and winter 1985, and so do not reflect developments in the district later in the 1985 school year.

the things they're going to be doing is having kids from South Boston High School in significant numbers working in part-time jobs." Ted Dooley noted that on the school side, "The School Department has internalized the activities of the Compact. It's less dependent on the skeletal structure of the Compact." He pointed out that the Compact office and its staff were housed in the School Department and that the PIC Career experience teachers' salaries had been picked up by a $300,000 appropriation from the School Committee. It's boosters thought that as both an organizational unit and as a new way of doing things, the Compact was becoming increasingly accepted. Jane Morrison-Margulis believed that the Compact was even sinking roots in the schools. "Every day in every high school, a non-union person is teaching. The fact that this was occurring while teachers were being laid off is astounding." She thought that there were so many different people and institutions publicly linked to the Compact through a deliberate public relations and media campaign that it would be hard for them to renege on their agreements. The Compact "won't go away because there are too many people with their feet in it. There's a great deal of theater attached; the amount is astonishing, and it is also substantive."

## THE BOSTON COMPACT
## PART E: POSTSCRIPT

Between April 1985 when field research for this case study was completed and the end of the 1986 academic year, the following developed:

- Superintendent Spillane announced his resignation in May and departed for Fairfax, Virginia at the end of June 1985.

- School-based planning ended in most of the high schools once word of Spillane's impending departure got around. A few high schools--Jamaica Plain and Dorchester among them--continued, but pressure and support from the district office was in short supply after May 1985.

- The Compact was incorporated into the Boston School Department in summer 1985. It was merged with school-based planning and the school improvement program to form a new department of school assistance. The manager of the new unit was not a fan of the Compact's school improvement program.

- New Superintendent Laval S. Wilson was hired from Rochester, N. Y. Wilson was a top-down manager who did not have much confidence in school-based improvement approaches.

- The Compact was unable to develop support for its school improvement program inside the district office at the middle management level, particularly in the curriculum and instruction division.

- Robert Schwartz was named education advisor to Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis at the end of the 1986 school year. Ted Dooley, former assistant director of the PIC assumed Schwartz's job in the school department. Al McMahill left the school department soon after to head a state-wide Compact program initiated by the Governor's office.

- The business community provided enough jobs for Boston high school graduates such that every graduates who wanted a job was assured one as of June 1986. In addition, the business community pledged to guarantee entry level, middle management jobs to every Boston high school graduate who then went on to graduate from college.

- The business community established the Plan for Excellence, an endowed fund of over $8 million to support school projects and teacher fellowships, which was housed in Boston's community foundation, The Boston Foundation. The Plan for Excellence was managed by a board of directors that consisted of community and business leaders but which did not include voting representatives of the Boston School Department.

- The business community established a "last dollars" scholarship program to provide all Boston high school graduates who wanted to go to college with the funds necessary after other financial sources had been exhausted.

- Student achievement on standardized tests declined in both reading and math, from 45 percentile in reading and 47 percentile in math in 1985 to 41 percentile in reading and 38 percentile in math in 1986. The decline was partly due to the use of a new version of the test and to a renorming of test results, but people inside and outside the school department believed the decline too great to be the result of renorming alone. The school attendance rate improved by two percentage points. The drop-out rate continued to rise from 43% for the class of 1985 to 46% for the class of 1986.

- Superintendent Wilson began work on his own approach to school improvement, which in its early stages involved identifying 16 district-wide problems and convening 20 member task forces of school department and community representatives to develop recommendations that addressed each problems. This planning effort was expected to continue through Spring 1987, at which time recommendations for action would be submitted to the Boston School Committee.

- The business community strongly supported Wilson but was growing restless at the lack of progress toward improving the schools.